DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 346 449 CS 010 973

AUTHOR Kaiser, Susan
TITLE A Comparison of Performance on the California Achievement Test Administered Mid-Year between Students of Native Spanish Bilingual and Monolingual Backgrounds.
PUB DATE May 92
NOTE 36p.; M.A. Thesis, Kean College of New Jersey.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bilingualism; *Bilingual Students; Comparative Analysis; Elementary School Students; Grade 1; *Hispanic Americans; *Monolingualism; Primary Education; *Reading Readiness; Reading Research; *Scores; *Spanish Speaking
IDENTIFIERS *California Achievement Tests; Elizabeth School District NJ

ABSTRACT

A study tested the assumption that there would be no significant difference in the test scores of the California Achievement Test between students of monolingual Hispanic and bilingual Hispanic backgrounds. The sample tested two groups of first-grade children (21 children in all) with Hispanic backgrounds in Elizabeth, New Jersey. A comparison of the test scores indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups. The hypothesis that a comparison of performance on a California Achievement Test administered mid-year will show no difference in reading readiness between students of bilingual and monolingual Hispanic backgrounds at the first grade level was proven. (Three tables of data are included; an appendix of test data is attached.) (Author/SR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED346449

A Comparison of Performance On The California Achievement Test Administered Mid-Year Between Students of Native Spanish Bilingual And Monolingual Backgrounds

by

Susan Kaiser

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Susan Kaiser

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Master of Arts Degree in Reading at

Kean College of New Jersey

May, 1992

accepted
8/4/92

CS010973

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to test the assumption that there would be no significant difference in the test scores of the California Achievement Test between students of monolingual Hispanic and Bilingual Hispanic backgrounds.

The sample tested two groups of first grade children with Hispanic backgrounds in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

A comparison of the test scores indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups. The hypothesis that a comparison of performance on a California Achievement Test administered mid-year will show no difference in reading readiness between students of bilingual and monolingual Hispanic backgrounds at the first grade level was proven.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project is dedicated to my sons, Richard and Lance, who have encouraged me and stood by me for the past 16 years. This is a milestone in my life - I will be graduated from Kean College with an M.A., Richard will be graduated from high school, and Lance will be graduated from The Rectory School and on to The Westminster School.

I also wish to thank my mother, Mary Tripp Miller, for being the inspiration and mentor she has been for me. She taught me the value of perserverance and hard work.

I began my long trek back at Kean College in 1984, with 36 transferable undergraduate credits. In 1987, I was graduated Summa Cum Laude. I returned at the Master's level in 1989. I wish to acknowledge the people who inspired me - Dr. Deborah Allen, Dr. Michael Knight, Dr. Davida Schuman, Dr. Dorothy Hennings, and Dr. Joan Kastner.

As a single parent in her 16th year, I wish to thank my support system that has faithfully cared for and encouraged me. These people include Stephanie and David Williams, Kathy and Joe Viso, Gail and Wayne Hengstenberg, Kathy and Tracy Douglass, Nancy and Charlie Klewin, and my mother and stepfather, Bill Miller. Carmen Marchese was always available for anything that went wrong in my house.

I am truly indebted to Headmasters Green and Army at the Rectory School, who cared for and believed in my children. I am also indebted to the faculty at The Rectory School for all they have done for Lance - Mr. Mario Ferrucci, Mr. Brad Seaward, Mrs. Marjorie Ellsworth, Mrs. Margaret Molnar, Mr. Charles E. Williamson, Jr., Mr. George W. Groom, and Mr. Washburn.

The faculty at School No. 3, Peterstown, NJ, has been very supportive

to me. I wish to acknowledge Principals DeMarco and Halem, Mrs. Janice Ur, Mrs. Deborah Hampson, The Child Study Team, and the Office Personnel.

Last but not least, I wish to thank Dr. Albert J. Mazurkiewicz for his patience, guidance, and understanding throughout this endeavor. He deserves much credit and respect for his expertise.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	Abstract	i
II.	Acknowledgements	ii
III.	Table of Contents	iv
IV.	List of Tables	v
V.	A Comparison of Performance On The California Achievement Test Administered Mid-Year Between Students Of Native Bilingual And Monolingual Backgrounds	
	Introduction	1
	Hypothesis	3
	Definitions	4
	Procedures	5
	Results	6
	Conclusions and Implications	7
VI.	Related Research	8
VII.	References	25
VIII.	Appendix	26

LIST OF TABLES

Table — Page

I. Mean, Standard Deviation, and t of the CAT Scores of First Graders in February of 1992. Visual and Sound Recognition Tests 6

II. Mean, Standard Deviation and t of the CAT Scores of First Graders in February of 1992. Vocabulary and Comprehension Tests 6

III. Mean, Standard Deviation, and t of the CAT Scores of First Graders in February of 1992. Language Expression Test 6

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

It is far easier to measure a monolingual child's reading development as opposed to a bilingual child's reading development. An achievement test or criterion-referenced test can easily assess a monolingual's reading capability; however, this same standard of measure is far from being accurate so far as a bilingual student's capability is concerned.

The rapidly increasing numbers of students entering preschool, kindergarten, and first grade from monolingual backgrounds has given rise to the expansion of bilingual and English as a Second Language classes. The majority of students in bilingual Hispanic classes enter Peterstown School 3 in Elizabeth, New Jersey, knowing very little English. The school provides bilingual (Spanish/English) education grades preschool through fifth grade. It is continued in the middle schools and at the high school level. In addition to these classes, the students also receive further instruction in English as a Second Language, which is taught in English.

The students I have been working with have come to the United States from Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico. The Spanish spoken by these children is not Castilian, rather different dialects according to where they are from.

From the turn of the century to the 1970's, traditionally foreign speaking students entering school at any level were taught in English. Presently, Hispanics are the fastest growing segment of the population of non-English speaking backgrounds entering school. There still remains the constant debate as to whether to teach these students in their native tongue prior to teaching them in English, or providing them with bilingual

classroom settings with as much exposure to English as is possible. Both of these teaching philosophies have been tested in our school systems. Elizabeth chooses to have the students in blingual classrooms with as much emphasis on learning in English as possible.

My association with these students in the bilingual first grade classes is through the Basic Skills Program, which affords remediation in reading, language, and math according to guidelines set forth on the scores of the California Achievement Test administered in the spring of each year. Hispanic students are placed in the regular classroom once they have achieved a satisfactory score on the Lab Test (English Oral Proficiency Test). This test is administered orally and consists of four parts: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. The test has two forms, Form A and Form B for both the Level I and Level II Tests. The Level I Test is administered to grades Kindergarten, First, and Second. The Level II Test is administered to grades Third, Fourth, and Fifth. Passing scores are different for each grade level.

A student having an Hispanic background, who is illiterate in English at any grade level, is placed in a bilingual self-contained classroom. The student is afforded a three-year time period in which to attain a satisfactory score on the Lab Test, thus enabling him/her to enter a regular classroom.

A student in a self-contained bilingual classroom must receive 45 minutes of English as a Second Language (ESL) per day. Once a student passes the Lab Test, he/she no longer qualifies for ESL. The student is placed in a regular classroom.

If a student's parents or parent are illiterate in their native langu-

age, there is no basic structure for any language to be acquired by the student. This creates a doubly difficult situation - illiteracy in the native language as well as the English Language.

James Cummins (1979) believes that linguistic factors, socio-cultural factors, and school program factors must be considered in the development of bilingual's speech. He feels there is a need for a theoretical framework as well as exploration of the relationships between language and cognition in the context of U.S. bilingual education programs (Paulston, 1978). The developmental interdependence hypothesis of Cummins (1979) proposes that the level of the second language (L2) competence which a bilingual child attains is partially a function of the type of competence the child has developed in the first language (L1) at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins. For children whose L1 skills are less well-developed in certain respects, intensive exposure to L2 in the initial grades is likely to impede the continued development of L2. This will in turn, exert a limiting effect on the development of L2. In short, the hypothesis proposes that there is an interaction between the language of instruction and the type of competence the child has developed in his L1 prior to school.

Based on the foregoing, a study to determine whether the performance on a California Achievement Test administered mid-year would show differences in reading readiness at the first grade level between students of Hispanic bilingual and Hispanic monolingual backgrounds was undertaken.

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that a comparison of performance on a California Achievement Test administered mid-year would show no difference in reading readiness between students of bilingual and monolingual Hispanic back-

grounds at the first grade level.

Assumptions and Limitations

The classroom teacher testing the students on the California Achievement Test will have established rapport with the students and will not have a reactive effect on the behavior to be observed.

One specified teacher will administer the CAT to all students involved to ensure uniformity.

The students of the two specified groups will remain anonymous.

Retainees will not be part of the sampling.

The chronological age will be no more than 6 years, one month.

Definitions

CAT: California Achievement Test - The CAT, Forms E and F, are norm-referenced tests for kindergarten through Grade 12. The series is designed to measure achievement in the basic skills commonly found in state and district curricula. Because the tests combine the most useful characteristics of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests, they provide information about the relative ranking of students against a norm group as well as specific information about the instructional needs of students. The subject areas measured by CAT E and F are reading, spelling, language, mathematics, and study skills.

Percentiles: A range from 1 - 99, indicating how well a student has tested in relation to other students in the same grade. A percentile rank indicates the percentage of scores in a norm group that fall below a given student's scale score.

Lab Test: A test administered at each grade level to determine knowledge of the English language. Each grade level has a specified score to attain to qualify for passage into the regular classroom (solely based on the English language).

Monolingual: Knowing or able to use only one language.

Bilingual: Able to speak two languages, esp. with the facility of a native speaker.

English as a Second Language (ESL): Students who have come to the United States from many countries around the world who are learning English as their second language.

Procedures

The CAT will be administered early in January, 1992. There will be two defined groups of children taking the test, ten bilinguals and eleven monolinguals. All 21 students speak English and are learning to read and write the language also. I refer to their being either monolingual or bilingual home backgrounds. The children who speak only Spanish in their households are labeled Monolingual. Those who speak both Spanish and English at home are labeled Bilingual.

The two specified groups will be tested in an environment conducive for such a procedure. The students will take the CAT, Form E, Level 10. This is the same test that incoming first graders would take upon entry if transferring into our school.

The students will be in the first grade-fifth month when the test is administered. The chronological age will be no more than 6 years, one month.

The data collected will be taken from five areas of the CAT - Test 1,

Visual Recognition, Test 2, Sound Recognition, Test 3, Vocabulary, Test 4, Comprehension, and Test 5, Language Expression. Tests 1 and 2 are scored together, Tests 3 and 4 are scored together, and Test 5 stands alone.

Results

As can be seen in Tables I, II, and III, there is no significant difference in the mean of the CAT scores between first grade students tested mid-year whether they came from monolingual or bilingual family backgrounds.

Table I

TESTS 1 AND 2 - VISUAL AND SOUND RECOGNITION

Variable	Mean	STD Deviation	N
Bilingual	33.9000	18.5140	10
Monolingual	34.3636	16.13686	11

Table II

TESTS 3 AND 4 - VOCABULARY AND COMPREHENSION

Variable	Mean	STD Deviation	N
Bilingual	47.1000	20.9361	10
Monolingual	51.0909	18.3709	11

Table III

TEST 5 - LANGUAGE EXPRESSION

Variable	Mean	STD Deviation	N
Bilingual	38.9000	25.7227	10
Monolingual	37.3636	23.1744	11

Conclusions and Implications

An analysis of the results of this study indicated that there is not any significant difference in the reading readiness of first graders mid-year coming from monolingual or bilingual family backgrounds. This study clearly supports the hypothesis.

Factors which need to be periodically assesed are whether or not we are providing these students with what they need, what is the teacher expectancy of these students, the students' attitudes toward learning and the attitudes of the teachers towards their students. In some circumstances a closer examination of these students' abilities is totally overlooked. Teachers need more training and expertise to be cognizant of these underlying abilities.

The conclusions after comparing the students with bilingual backgrounds and those with monolingual backgrounds may influence the school administration to encourage monolingual parents how important English literacy is within the family unit. Reading books to children at home from a very early age is a premise fostered to encourage the love of books and the knowledge of the structure of language. This is particularly important for reading readiness and the child's ability to acquire language skills.

Parental involvement must be fostered within our school systems. The lack of communication that monolingual parents experience alienates them from the school community. They need to become a part of it. Their children need a stronger support system at home which they are not receiving.

Cooperative learning activities which require students to interact with one and other have proven to be beneficial. These children need extensive oral language practice in both English and Spanish.

RELATED RESEARCH

Language acquisition, be it monolingual or bilingual, has several important components. Before a child begins to speak, he/she has a stored unspoken mental vocabulary. He/she may have a grasp on concepts not yet verbalized. Once verbalization has begun, the child is actively communicating within his/her environment. A child's beginning verbalizations are amongst the closest of kin; usually parents and siblings. The basis for the child's verbal development begins at home. The child is directly affected by the home environment from the very beginning.

Exposure to people, other children, places and different things contribute to a child's experiences. Parents who read to their children on a daily basis offer the most exposure to thoughts, ideas, and an increased vocabulary, and the child will be able to interpret written expression differently than verbal expression. This in particular is paramount to the basis for a solid foundation in the learning process of reading.

In order for a child to acquire the speech that is heard, he/she must be actively listening. That which is heard is imitated by the child. When the child first enters prekindergarten, nursery school, or kindergarten, he/she brings the experiences he/she has accumulated thus far in his/her life. Symbols are then equated with sounds. Thus, the child learns to read. Once reading occurs, writing is not far behind. The four components of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are enmeshed in the continuing learning process of any language.

It is far easier to measure a monolingual child's reading development as opposed to a bilingual child's reading development. An achievement test or criterion-referenced test can easily assess a monolingual's reading cap-

ability; however, this same standard of measure is far from being accurate so far as a bilingual student's capability is concerned.

James Cummins (1979) believes that linguistic factors, socio-cultural factors, and school program factors must be considered in the development of bilingual's speech. He feels there is a need for a theoretical framework as well as exploration of the relationships between language and cognition in the context of U.S. bilingual education programs (Paulston, 1978). The developmental interdependence hypothesis of Cummins (1979) proposes that the level of the second language (L2) competence which a bilingual child attains is partially a function of the type of competence the child has developed in the first language (L1) at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins. For children whose L1 skills are less well-developed in certain respects, intensive exposure to L2 in the initial grades is likely to impede the continued development of L1. This will in turn, exert a limiting effect on the development of L2. In short, the hypothesis proposes that there is an interaction between the language of instruction and the type of competence the child has developed in his L1 prior to school.

'This basic idea has previously been expressed by Toukomaa and Skutnabb-Kangas (1977). In discussing the threshold hypothesis in minority language situations, they argue that the basis for the possible attainment of the threshold level of L2 competence seems to be the level attained in the mother tongue. If in an early stage of its development a minority child finds itself in a foreign-language learning environment without contemporaneously receiving the requisite support in its mother tongue, the development of its skill in the mother tongue will slow down or even cease, leaving the child without a basis for learning the second language well enough to attain

the threshold level in it.' (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1977)

Cummins (1978) suggests that differences in the way in which children's L1 has been developed by their linguistic experience prior to school contribute to the differential outcomes of a home-school language switch in minority and majority language situations. However, there has been little consideration of which aspects of L1 development interact with medium of instruction. This can be meaningfully discussed only in relation to the types of information which the child is required to process in school. The primary academic task for the child is learning how to extract information efficiently from printed text and subsequent educational progress largely depends upon how well this task is accomplished. Thus, for present purposes, the differential outcomes of a home-school language switch can be discussed in relation to the extent to which the L1 experience of minority and majority language children prior to school has provided them with the prerequisites for acquiring fluent reading skills.

Cummins (1978) has adapted from (Toukomaa & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1977) the cognitive effects of different types of bilingualism. The first type of bilingualism is additive bilingualism. The child has achieved high levels in both languages and has positive cognitive effects. The second type of bilingualism is dominant bilingualism. The child has native-like level of one of the languages and neither positive nor negative cognitive effects. The third type of bilingualism is semilingualism. The child is low level in both languages (may be balanced or dominant). The child experiences negative cognitive effects.

Ianco-Worrall (1972) and Commins(1989) both spent a considerable amount of time investigating the home environments of the students they were study-

ing. Ianco-Worrall (1972) held mother interviews. In the course of a home interview the mother was asked to supply information on the socioeconomic and language background of her family. The first part of the questionnaire dealt with background information and was administered verbally to the mother. The second part dealt with details on the language interaction in the family. The mother was asked to read the instructions and then to underline on a four-part scale the word most applicable in her child's case. The first part dealt with how often English was being used in the family, the second part with how often Afrikaans was being used. The mother's interaction was determined first: how often she spoke to the child in English/Afrikaans, how often the child replied in that language when she spoke to him, and whether the conversation then continued in that language. The child was then considered in relation to mother: how often he addressed the mother in English/Afrikaans, how often she replied to the child in that language, and whether the conversation continued in that language. Father-child language interaction was similarly ascertained, as were the child's interactions with siblings and other members of the family. Further information was obtained on the child's language experience outside the home, in school, playground , and so on. The final phase of the interview was taped. It consisted of an informal conversation with the mother on her impressions and observations concerning the child's bilingual experience.

Commins (1989) collected her data from a number of different sources. She conducted comprehensive family interviews and spent time participating in out-of-school activities with her students and their families. She observed the interactions of her four low achieving Hispanic students as well as 200 hours of participant observations over a two-month period of time. The data collected focused on the verbal interaction between the students

and their teachers, paraprofessionals, and peers. She observed the students use of Spanish and English in both academic and nonacademic contexts. Commins' observations were done in different subject areas: in small group, whole-group, and one-on-one settings; and nonacademic periods such as special classes (music, art, physical education), lunch and recess.

The results of Commins' study indicated that the students were passive learners. "The classroom reflected what Harste and Burke (1977) referred to as a skills-based orientation, where basal readers and workbooks predominate and isolated skills are developed devoid of any meaningful context (Edelsky & Smith, 1984). Many of the tasks the students were asked to do seemed to lack meaning for them. Lessons were characterized by decontextualized skill-building activities driven by the demands of district-mandated competency exams administered every 10 weeks. The class lacked an orientation that would have integrated graphophonic, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic systems of written language (Edelsky & Smith, 1984).

Literacy development was hindered because students were unable to learn the conventions of written language through authentic 'real language-in-use' (DeFord & Harste, 1982). Mr. Chavez, the teacher did 90% of the talking. Students were not included in developing the agenda for learning. Across settings, students were seldom asked to do tasks that required the conceptualization or verbalization of abstract principles, a predictable outcome of the skills orientation of the classroom. Commins & Miramontes (1989) found that "the whole-class setting in which the students spent most of their time and from which the teacher, Mr. Chavez, most often observed them was the one in which these students demonstrated the least proficiency and were least productive. Thus, a vicious cycle of lowered expectations producing

lowered performance was perpetuated.

Garcia (1986) describes bilingualism as the acquisition of two languages during the first five years of life. This means that children are exposed "Naturally to the two systems of languages as they are used in the form of social interaction during early childhood." An example of this kind of bilingualism development is illustrated by the activity of a relative who is a professor at Texas A & M, married to a Peruvian, Maritza. When Fred and Maritza had their first child, a girl, Maritza spoke entirely in Spanish to her; Fred entirely in English. Because the child was exposed to both languages simultaneously, and on a daily basis, thus reinforcing what was heard and spoken, the child's acquisition was equal in both languages. This procedure would appear to be ideal for bilingual acquisition. Fred and Maritza feel that during early childhood, a child could easily acquire four languages simultaneously if the environment provided the opportunity. This may be feasible if the child travels to foreign countries or has relatives visiting for extended periods of time.

Garcia (1986) states that the simultaneous character of development must be apparent in both languages. This is contrasted with the case of a native speaker of one language, who, after mastery of that language, begins on a course of second language acquisition. The definition of bilingualism stresses the importance of the acquisition of two languages within social contexts during a very significant cognitive development period.

It is relevant to stress the fact that socioeconomic factors play a crucial role in bilingualism. Those parents who are well-educated and able to afford the time and tutoring alloted to many competent bilingual children cannot be compared to the progress children of low socioeconomic status

maintain.

Claude N. Goldenberg discusses parents' effects on their children's reading achievement as among the most consistently documented findings in educational research. Hess and Holloway (1984) have identified five major kinds of influence: the value of the parents' "press" for academic achievement, availability of reading materials in the home, amount of time parents spend reading with the child, and children's opportunities for verbal interactions in the home (Hess & Holloway, 1984).

In essence, parents' effects on children's literacy development have been conceived as occurring within the home and directly affecting reading achievement: Parent-child interactions, such as reading and talking together, and learning opportunities, such as those provided by the presence of literacy materials in the home, are thought to enhance interest and literacy or both (Goldenberg, 1989).

Tucker (1977) (as stated in Cummins, 1979) argues that social, rather than pedogogical factors will probably condition the optimal sequencing of languages. Thus, in situations where the home language is denigrated by the community at large, where many teachers are not members of the same ethnic group as the pupils and are insensitive to their values and traditions, where there does not exist a pressure within the home to encourage literacy and language maintenance, and where universal primary education is not a reality it would seem desirable to introduce children to schooling in their vernacular language. Conversely, in settings where the home language is highly valued, where parents do actively encourage literacy and where it is 'known' that the children will succeed, it would seem fully appropriate to begin schooling in the second language.

Garcia (1986) cites Wong-Fillmore and Valadez (1985) as having generated an expanded set of assumptions on which much of the language-minority education in the United States presently rests:

1. Students who are less than fully proficient in the school language will have difficulty deriving academic benefit from their educational experience, since the inability to understand the language in which instruction is given precludes comprehension of the content of that instruction.

2. It takes LEP (Low English Proficiency) students time to acquire the level of proficiency in English that is needed to participate effectively in all-English classes. During the time it takes to learn English, they will get little out of their school experience if they are instructed exclusively in that language.

3. Instruction in the native language of LEP students allows them to participate in school, and to acquire the skills and knowledge covered in the curriculum while they are learning English. It also allows them to make use of skills, knowledge and experiences they already have, and to build on those prior assets in school.

4. Knowledge and skills are more easily acquired by LEP students in their native language; but computational skills and many literacy skills acquired in the native language can be transferred to the new language once it is mastered. Hence time spent in learning materials in the native language is not time that is lost with respect to the coverage of subject matter in school.

5. Students need adequate exposure to the language of school in order to acquire it as a second language; this exposure to English is best when it takes place in settings which the learners' special linguistic needs help to

shape the way the language gets used. Subject matter instruction which is given in English can provide the exposure that LEP students need, as long as it is appropriately tailored for them. Subject matter instruction in the school language is an essential component of bilingual education.

6. Formal instruction in English as a second language (ESL) can help students get started learning the language. ESL, whether it is formal or informal, is an integral part of American bilingual education programs.

7. The academic potential of all children, including those served by bilingual programs, have the best chance of being realized when their language skills, their social and cultural experiences, and their knowledge of the world are affirmed in school; these are the foundations of academic development.

Nancy L. Commins researched bilingual students at home and at school (1989) and came to some of the following conclusions. Students' attitudes about themselves and their home language and culture can affect their progress in both language development and academics. Educators cognizant of these attitudes should stress the value of the bilingual students' home language and culture. Language barriers do negate communication between home and school. LEP parents feel threatened by their inability to communicate with educators. This has been misinterpreted by educators as a lack of concern on their part for the education their children are receiving.

Teachers may need to avail themselves to take extra steps to involve parents directly in school related programs. It is crucial that special attention be given to the ways in which two languages are used so that both languages are seen as vehicles for academic advancement. Most districts' competency tests emphasize mechanics of language; therefore, instructional

focus is on basic skills. Many teachers rely heavily upon textbook and workbook exercises for both language arts and reading. This ultimately diminishes the return of students to comprehend a language when being taught skills in isolation.

Commins (1989) feels there is a need for classroom arrangements which promote and allow for interaction among students in which they are required to pose questions, explore ideas and values, and seek solutions to the problems of living in two worlds. She found that the highest level of proficiency was in cooperative or collaborative activities in which the students had to talk to each other to accomplish the objective. Students need extensive oral language practice in both English and their native language.

Commins and Maramontes (1989) conducted interviews with teachers of bilingual students and found three major themes emerged from the teachers' replies. The questions asked were about low-achieving bilingual students' academic potential. Their findings are (a) the students did not have the necessary "concepts" needed for academic work in either language; (b) there was a lack of support at home for academics, with students forgetting about school as soon as they left the school building; and (c) students had internalized, even in a bilingual setting, that English was the proper language for instruction in school, but they used Spanish exclusively outside of school. Comments made to Commins and Miramontes (1989) were typified by the following remarks one teacher made. "I think this is a unique situation, because these students have not been placed in a bilingual situation earlier and, therefore, they come to us already with two languages, but no dominant cognitive process in either language....Mixed-dominant is probably what I've been describing. You could say 'mixed-undominant' ....They haven't develop-

ed a dominance as far as academics are concerned in either language. As far as how they prefer to speak, yes. They are dominant in the Spanish language, most of them because when they are speaking to people around them that they know speak Spanish, they speak Spanish. We tried complete Spanish instruction in the subject areas, but what we find out at this point is that the kids don't have a real strong base in either language."

Commins and Maramontes (1989) define semilingual to indicate those individuals who have not fully developed the code of either their first or second language and, as a result, have diminished cognitive skills. Commins and Miramontes (1989) cite Grosjean (1982) who states that a popular belief is that children who code-switch (alternately use two languages) do so because they do not command enough pieces in either language to form a complete code; thus, they are considered semilingual. It was thought that instruction in the mother tongue would alleviate the problem of similingualism.

The following is an excerpt from Commins and Miramontes (1989). It relates to the interpersonal and academic proficiency of bilinguals. It is directly related to misperception of the abilities of bilingual students. It concerns two hypothesized levels of language use: basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALPS) (Cummins, 1979). Rather than being understood as different facets of communicative behavior, the BICS-CALPS dichotomy has been interpreted to mean that these facets reflect greater or lesser cognitive abilities. The levels have been related to Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive skills, equating BICS with lower level cognitive operations and CALPS with higher cognitive functions. Thus, a hierarchy of cognitive ability has been interpreted to exist between oral language and academic (written) language.

BICS and CALPS have been incorporated into educators' vocabulary. It is popularly understood that the underlying ability necessary for communicating on an interpersonal level is different (and inferior) from that needed for doing academic work. In response to such criticisms and in the continued evolution of theory, the BICS/CALPS conceptualization was revised to incorporate interacting continua of cognitive complexity and context embeddedness (Cummins, 1981). These new insights, however, have generally not been included in teachers' discussions of their students. BICS/CALPS are constantly being reexamined and redefined (Cummins, 1986).

Ofelia B. Miramontes (1990) conducted a study of English oral reading skills in differently schooled groups of Hispanic students. Her data was gathered using the Reading Miscue Inventory (RMI) protocol (Burke & Goodman, 1972). "Graded basal reading selections unfamiliar to the students and approximately one grade level above their present school reading level were selected for oral reading. Selections were adjusted if too few miscues were occurring. First-through fourth-grade stories were selected from reading series by Addison-Wesley (1982) and Economy (1980). Fifth-through seventh-grade stories were taken from the Rand McNally reading program (1978). These reading series were selected because they were not being used in either of the two school districts." The subjects chosen for the study were 40 Mexican-Americans from two large school districts in the Southwest. Two groups of 'good' English and Spanish readers were compared with students considered low achieving and mixed dominant. Ten Good English (GE) readers were selected, ten Good Spanish-ESL readers, and 20 Mexican-American mixed dominantstudents who had experienced a home-school language shift. The categories tested included Graphic Similarity, Sound Similarity, Grammatical

Function, Comprehension, Grammatical Relationships, Retelling, and Fluency. Miramontes (1990) found "in the area of grammatical function, no significant difference was apparent between the MD and GE groups. Both of these groups, however, differed significantly from GS-ESL readers. In both comparisons, GS-ESL students retained the syntactic structure of the text better than the other two groups.

In the categories most closely related to semantic criteria (comprehension and grammatical relationships), only one significant difference was found between groups. In the comprehension category (the ability to retain the meaning of the text within its immediate context), GS-ESL students' scores were significantly higher than those of the MD students. The scores of the GE group were not significantly different from either the MD or GS-ESL group. No significant difference was indicated between any of the groups in the grammatical relationship category.

Scores for retelling reflected the students' overall comprehension of the story they read and a significant difference between the MD and GS-ESL groups was indicated on this measure. A significant difference was also found in the grade level stories read by each of the three groups.

The significant difference in grade levels of story read by the students suggested possible difference in the fluency with which students read text. Fluency in this study was estimated as the average number of correct words each student had read per miscue made. Analysis of the data in this reading performance category indicated that the GE group was significantly different from both the MD and GS-ESL groups. GE students averaged 33 words per miscue in contrast to 16 words per miscue for both the MD and GS-ESL groups."

Miramontes (1990) states that the purpose of her study "was to identify

compare the patterns of oral reading miscues, retelling, and fluency of Hispanic students characterized as mixed language dominant. These students are often presumed to lack skills and, perhaps, to have significant linguistic deficits which block them from becoming competent readers. Careful examination of their performance, however, can provide cues to their abilities which indicate points of emphasis for more effective instruction.

Although categorized by their teachers as a group of poor readers, the MD students' use of comprehension strategies and story recall were remarkably similar to those of good Hispanic English readers.

Educationally, the mixed dominant students in this study were at a disadvantage in relationship to both the GE and GS-ESL groups. Each of these good reading groups were successful readers in one language, were perceived as such by their teachers, and were given access to a broader and more sophisticated world of text. This was not true for MD stufents. An added disadvantage for the MD students was the pervasive perception that they all had similar limitations and were generally weak in all skills. Although for some of these students' strategy use was weak in some areas, most also exhibited areas of strength. For the mixed dominant students who demonstrated similar strategies to those of good readers, teacher identification of these students as poor readers indicates that those abilities were apparently unidentified, underestimated, or misunderstood.

The results of this study suggest that the development of successful programs for students with differential abilities in two languages requires a broader knowledge of their individual competencies across various skill areas, as well as a better understanding of language acquisition processes and the interaction between languages. Multiple opportunities for students

to demonstrate their knowledge need to be sought. This can only occur if teachers are actively engaged in searching for the ability cues that indicate students' real proficiencies. The ability to identify, value, and utilize the things students 'can do' can help teachers purposefully engage students in bringing those abilities to bear on meaningful academic tasks" (Miramontes, 1990).

Guadalupe Valdes (1989) cites that in 1979, the report of the President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies set in motion a new trend within the profession. Concerned about the country's ability to compete in international arenas because of the foreign language limitations of most Americans, the Commission recommended that standards be set for assessing the proficiency of both students and teachers in foreign language programs, for determining the language skills required to function in a variety of contexts, and for establishing language proficiency achievement goals for the end of each year of study. In response to these recommendations, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), funded by the Department of Education, undertook two major projects: (1) the training of academic oral proficiency testers, and (2) the identification and description of language proficiency achievement goals.

"The results of these activities are well known to most foreign language teaching professionals today. In 1982, the ACTFL/ETS Provisional Provisional Proficiency Guidelines were circulated publicly and the current initiative focusing on using these guidelines both for organizing the foreign language curriculum and for oral proficiency testing began in earnest. The guidelines included generic descriptions of the kinds of functions and activities students could carry out in the target language in specific con-

texts and set forth a sequence of progression that students are known (or thought) to follow in acquiring the ability to use a second language. These guidelines or descriptors were then used as a basis for rating foreign language learners within the context of oral proficiency interviews patterned after the oral examination strategy developed by the Foreign Service Institute" (Valdes, 1989).

My research suggests conclusively that many mixed dominant bilingual Hispanic students' abilities are overlooked, misunderstood, or misperceived. With ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines, teacher training in this specific field, and curriculum set forth to meet the needs of these students, there will be a noticeable change in the positive results of this segment of the school population.

Schools should support the development of native language literacy and actively solicit parent participation in the process. Teachers should allow students the time and space to work out their identities. Classroom arrangements which promote and allow for interaction among students should require students to pose questions, explore ideas and values, and seek solutions to the problems of living in two worlds. Cooperative and collaborative activities have shown the highest level of proficiency with these students. They need extensive oral language practice in both English and their native language.

Four schools in the Elizabeth Public School system have been allocated funds to implement the "Success For All" program instituted through a non-profit organization of Johns Hopkins University. It is designed to educate those students who are at risk of failure by using one-on-one instruction as well as homogeneous reading groups on a daily basis. This program has

proven to be highly successful in both Baltimore and Philadelphia. The bilingual students will partake in this program. It will be institued in the fall of 1992. The entire school will have reading groups at the same time each day. Those students designated for one-on-one instruction will be taken for at least 20 minutes each day. This approach of having one-on-one instruction daily will definitely reach the core of the problem. It will not allow these at risk students to fall between the cracks of an educational system that has allowed it to happen in the past. The teacher training and curriculum of this program will benefit all teachers who are involved. The most important aspect of any program is trying to meet the needs of the students; however, knowledgeable faculty must be able to assess what the needs are. Then programs must be implemented to meet these needs. Ongoing teacher training is imperative to carry out the programs instituted. With a clearly established strategy and properly trained teacher professionals, the students should benefit tremendously.

REFERENCES

Bachman, Lyle F. and Sandra J. Savignonl "The Evaluation of Communicative Language Proficiency: A Critique of the ACTFL Oral Interview," Modern Language Journal 70 (Winter 1986):380-90.

Byrnes, Heidi. "Proficiency as a Framework for Research in Second Language Acquisition," Modern Language Journal 71 (Spring 1987):44-49.

Commins, Nancy L. "Language and Affect: Bilingual Students at Home and at School," Language Arts. 66:29-43. January 1989.

Commins, N.L., and Miramontes, O. (1989). "A descriptive study of the linguistic abilities of a selected group of low achieving Hispanic bilingual students." American Educational Research Journal 26:443-472.

Cummins, James. "Linguistic Interdependence and Educational Development of Bilingual Children," Review of Educational Research 49 (1979):222-51.

Garcia, Eugene E. "Bilingual Development and the Education of Bilingual Children during Early Childhood," American Journal of Education, (November 1986) 95:96-121.

Goldenberg, Claude N. "Parents' Effects on Academic Groupings for Reading: Three Case Studies," American Educational Journal. (Fall 1989) 26: 329-352.

Hess, R., & Holloway, S. (1984). "Family and school as educational institutions," In R.D. Parke (Ed.), Review of child development research: Vol. 7. The Family (pp. 179-222) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hudelson, Sarah. "The Role of Native Language Literacy in the Education of Language Minority Children," Language Arts, 64:827-841. December 1987.

Ianco-Worrall, A. "Bilingualism and Cognitive Development," Child Development 43 (1972);1390-1400.

Miramontes, Ofelia B. "A Comparative Study of English Oral Reading Skills in Differently Schooled Groups of Hispanic Students," Journal of Reading Behavior.22:373-94. 1990.

Savignon, Sandra J. "Evaluation of Communicative: The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines," Modern Language Journal 69 (Summer 1985):129-34.

Valdes, Guadalupe. "Teaching Spanish to Hispanic Bilinguals: A Look at Oral Proficiency Testing and the Proficiency Movement." Hispania 72 (1989):392-401.

APPENDIX

National Percentile (NP) Scores on CAT - Bilingual Students

Student	Visual and Sound Recognition	Vocabulary and Comprehension	Language Expression
Case 1	6	42	5
Case 2	22	45	35
Case 3	59	91	86
Case 4	22	46	19
Case 5	28	33	35
Case 6	25	18	28
Case 7	20	42	49
Case 8	49	29	19
Case 9	59	65	78
Case 10	49	70	35

National Percentile (NP) Scores on CAT - Monolingual Students

Case 1	32	66	49
Case 2	25	60	78
Case 3	25	61	19
Case 4	39	65	49
Case 5	22	38	24
Case 6	32	43	24
Case 7	36	71	28
Case 8	79	62	78
Case 9	37	14	24
Case 10	19	26	10
Case 11	32	56	28